

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claim 31 is directed to a steering system having an axle with first and second end portions which are suspended by springs. The axle has an intermediate portion which at least partially defines a chamber through which a central axis of the axle extends. A first steerable wheel is pivotally mounted on a first end portion of the axle. A second steerable wheel is pivotally mounted on a second end portion of the axle.

A steering member is set forth in claim 31 as being supported in a chamber in the axle. A ball nut is disposed in the chamber in the axle. A drive member is connected with an electric motor and the ball nut to rotate the ball nut.

In addition, claim 31 sets forth a take-off assembly connected to the steering member and having portion projecting from an opening in the axle. A steering linkage is connected with the take-off assembly and extends along an outer side of the axle.

The prior art does not disclose a steering member which is supported in a chamber in an axle. In the patent to Ohmura, et al., a steering member or turning rod has been designated by the numeral 30 in Figs. 1 and 2 (the steering member is referred to in the specification of Ohmura, et al. by the numeral 46). The steering member 30 of Figs. 1 and 2 of Ohmura, et al. is not disposed in an axle.

In the patent to Cartwright a steering apparatus 10 (Fig. 2) is mounted on the outside of a solid front axle 56. The steering members of Cartwright are not disposed in an axle.

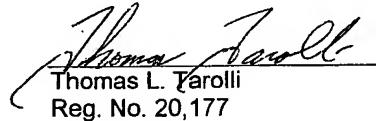
The patent to Ikeda, et al. discloses a steering linkage which is disposed outside of an axle (see Fig. 3).

There is no disclosure in any one of the patents to Ohmura, et al., Cartwright, and/or Ikeda, et al. of the concept of having a steering member disposed in a chamber in an axle in the manner set forth in claim 31. Since this concept is not disclosed in any of the references, a combination of the references can not render the subject matter of claim 31 obvious.

In addition, claim 31 defines over the patents to Ohmura, et al., Cartwright, and Ikeda, et al. by setting forth a ball nut as being disposed in the chamber in the axle. The patent to Ohmura, et al. discloses ball screw 44. However, the ball nut of Ohmura, et al. is not disposed in a chamber in an axle. The patents to Cartwright and Ikeda, et al. do not disclose ball nuts.

If for any reason the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner call applicant's attorneys in Cleveland, Ohio at 621-2234, area code 216. Please charge any deficiency in the fees for this application to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,



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